

**MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**CORTLAND COUNTY**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MEETING**

**Meeting January 24, 2023 – 3:00 P.M.**  
**County Office Building, 60 Central Ave, Room 312, Cortland**

**Chair: Elizabeth Larkin**

**Vice Chair: Ellen Wright**

**Director: Sharon MacDougall**

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**Members Present:** Elizabeth Larkin (Chair), Ellen Wright (Vice Chair), Christopher Bergene, Alexandra Mikowski and Susan Thomas (5)

**Members Absent:** Julie Partigianoni, Richard Shaw and Jennifer Sylstra

**Others Present:** Sharon MacDougall (Director Community Services), Patricia Schaap (Deputy Director of Community Services), Deputy Chief David Guerrero (Cortland City PD), Jeremy Miller (Helio Health), Jeannette Dippo (AFSP), Haile Cutter (Health Department), Jordan Perkins (CCSI/DSS), Lisa Roos (Guthrie Cortland Medical Center), Jessica Cranson and Antonio Triani Intern (F&CCS), Aster Parrott (CACTC), Janet Johnson (MD), Jamee Sobko, Cristin Marshall, Matthew Skojec and (Interns) Sinem Guler and Lindsay Meldrim (Cortland County Department of Mental Health) and Secretary, Gail Spitzer (18)

**Call to Order:** 3:04 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes**

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**\*\*Revision below\*\***

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**Agenda Item:** Introductions – Introductions around the room

Chair Elizabeth Larkin thanked everyone for attending and for the work being done – “Cortland is one of the best communities because organizations talk to one another, intertwined and work together...”

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**Agenda Item:** Approval of Minutes from November 14, 2022 Chair, Elizabeth Larkin asked for a motion to approve minutes

- ✓ Motion made by Alexandra Mikowski, seconded by Ellen Wright – unanimously approved

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**Agenda Item:** Vote: New Meeting Calendar

No meetings in July or August – Joint meetings in June and December – calendar schedule follows a different pattern

Discussion and Election – Chair and Vice Chair – Sharon MacDougall: seeking nominations – there being no nominations, Sharon asked Chair Larkin if she would consider continuing for one more year or until a candidate comes forward – she agreed – Vice Chair Ellen Wright agreed to continue as Vice Chair

- ✓ Members unanimously voted to continue with current Chair and Vice Chair

Discussion Ad Hoc Committee and By-Laws and next Local Services Plan (LSP)

Director, Sharon MacDougall: By-laws review was postponed last year as County status as non-Chartered County – for the present and near future, that County discussion has been tabled – ad hoc meeting will meet to review and update by-laws / LSP for the first time, will be a four year plan and will be due in June or July – seeking volunteers for one or the other or both ad hoc committees / anyone interested contact Sharon or Gail

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**Agenda Item:** Approve Minutes November 14, 2022 Chair Elizabeth Larkin asked for a motion

- ✓ Motion made by Alexandra Mikowski, seconded by Ellen Wright – unanimously approved with no changes

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**Agenda Item:** Presentation

➤ Guthrie Cortland Memorial Hospital – Lisa Roos, Nurse Manager of the Adult inpatient Psychiatric Unit – grant received in 2019 from NYS committed to put Cancer Center first – many planning meetings – Lisa had a mix of photographs and architectural renderings to outline plans for growth and redesign – combination for improving flexibility of use and functionality / designs out for pricing – project estimates are approximately twice the original amount budgeted and remaining State funding – construction costs and materials have increased exponentially over the last few years – Governor planning to increase mental health funding in her current budget – seeking advocacy and ideas / Sharon MacDougall – letters of advocacy in support of Guthrie can be written to the Governor and OMH

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**Agenda Item:** Community Partner Updates and Reports

Jeremy Miller (Helio Health) – staffing shortages – through all of NY, approximately 277 vacancies

Haile Cutter (Department of Health – System of Care) – Have plenty of gun locks go give our – Elizabeth (Betsy) Larking – will take a bin and keep them where she sells pistol permits, in her position as County Clerk

Susan Thomas (Racker Center @ OCM BOCES) – taking new position – will be working in residential program, with IDD adults as a clinical team leader in February

Ellen Wright (Retired Mental Health Nurse) – service in Cortland County “Dial-a-Ride” (Way2Go Cortland County) – well priced service, very clean vehicles, helpful drivers, wheel chair lift, curb to curb service **with two business day notice\*\*** – First Transit (607) 758-3383

Chris Bergene (OCFS Residential Programs) – change in ratio due to staffing issues – number of children in residential program higher than in 12 years

Matt Skojec (Clinical Director MH Programs – County MH Clinic) – OMH approved plan of corrective action after audit – filling vacancies for clinicians – have interns – working to help train next generation

Alexandra Mikowski (Director – Access to Independence) – received OMH money to train someone as a “benefits advisor” – letter from State with news of Substance Use grant award – telehealth room at ATI is still available / Transportation Committee – discussion of MAS (Medicaid transportation) problems – unreliable services – no show, vehicle not safe, cancel ride appointments at last minute – State funded – will invite MAS to the next Transportation meeting

Deputy Chief David Guerrero (City Police Department) – CIT quiet for December – usually over 50 calls, actually fewer than 35 – most calls resulted in transportation to the hospital – struggling with homelessness and drugs, behavioral problems at the “warming center”

Lisa Roos (Nurse Manager, 1E, Guthrie Cortland Memorial Hospital) – homeless presentation at ER, census is up; record numbers over the last year – staffing, happy to say, full staff except for one new nurse position – happy with the support of the administration

Janet Johnson (MD) – good to hear improvements at the hospital and the community follow-up

Cristin Marshall (Single Point Of Access Coordinator) – have been working to calculate numbers in both adult and child SPOA to follow trends – relatively adult SPOA new; since Medicaid redesign – numbers definitely up

Patty Schaap (Deputy Director and facilitator of the System of Care) – structured SOC meeting – every month – trying to increase medical representation at meetings – discussing barriers and trends – identifying increase in PINS (person in need of services) – system is “bursting” in all areas of behavioral health – trying to work on creative problem solving – contact Patty if interested in being involved [pschaap@cortland-co.org](mailto:pschaap@cortland-co.org)

Jamee Sobko (Director, Family Support Services at MH Clinic) – many referrals for children and youth – also short staffed – recently staff titled Mental Health Program Aides – Sharon MacDougall worked with Personnel and County to retitle Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialists at a higher grade, closer to the actual work being done by talented staff

Elizabeth Larkin, Chair – consider possibility of presentation at a high school level to discuss the importance and need for mental health providers

Jeanette Dippo (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) – AFSP provides on-line training for people who would like to establish support groups for survivors of suicide – have been trying to establish one in Cortland – anyone interested, contact Jeanette [jpdippo@aol.com](mailto:jpdippo@aol.com) / fund raiser at SUNY Cortland – hockey game – raised over \$10k

**Agenda Item:** Director’s Report Sharon MacDougall



MH DCS report  
1-2023.docx

Massive Statewide changes to SPOA – new forms and processes – also on County MH webpage / State of the State from Governor Hochul – State Budget time – Governor advocating for \$1B for MH needs – Housing needs / Grant opportunities – awarded \$2.9M – for new building / OMH State Aide awards – contracting – errors by State across the State – budget amendments will be required throughout the year / OMH reviewing the AOT laws – updated, reevaluated and approved – using focus groups including families with history in the AOT process

**Agenda Item:** Adjourn Chair Elizabeth Larkin asked for a motion to adjourn

✓ Motion by Ellen Wright, seconded by Susan Thomas - meeting adjourned 4:18 p.m.

**Next meeting: February 21, 2023 – 3:00 p.m. in the County Office Building**

Minutes submitted by Gail L. Spitzer  
607-428-5482

**Approved minutes available on County Website:**